

Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR, MX

SUBJECT: GOM VIEWS ON ILLEGAL MIGRANTS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

1. DEPUTY ASST. SECRETARY LUERS CALLED ON SUBSECRETARY OF AGRARIAN REFORM REYES OSORIO TO TRADE IMPRESSIONS ON ILLEGAL ALIEN PROBLEM, FUNCTIONS OF MEXICAN AND U.S. COMMISSIONS, AND CONDITIONS GENERALLY IN RURAL AREAS AFFECTING MIGRATION. ALSO PRESENT ON MEXICAN SIDE (AT REYES' SUGGESTION) WAS FONSEC JURIDICAL COUNSELOR BARONA LOBATO, WHO SERVES AS EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF MEXICAN COMMISSION.

2. LUERS EXPLAINED HIS FUNCTION WITHIN DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE AND NOTED THAT US COMMISSION ON ILLEGALS WAS GEARING UP TO PREPARE A PRELIMINARY REPORT BY SEPTEMBER. MEXICANS WERE OBVIOUSLY PLEASED TO LEARN OF PROGRESS ON THIS FRONT AND URGED THAT REGULAR CHANNEL OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN TWO COMMISSIONS BE ESTABLISHED, AVAILABLE DOCUMENTS AND DATA EXCHANGED, AND POSSIBILITY OF FACE-TO-FACE MEETINGS BETWEEN COMMISSION MEMBERS EXPLORED. LUERS PROMISED TO SEND INFO VIA EMBASSY ON U.S. COMMISSION MAKE-UP AND MANDATE.

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3. REYES OSORIO RELATED COMMISSION'S WORK TO BROADER

PROBLEM OF RURAL MIGRATION WITHIN MEXICO AND GOM EFFORTS TO RATIONALIZE LABOR SURPLUSES IN SOME AREAS WITH SHORTAGES IN OTHERS. NOTED THAT SUCCESS IN THESE EFFORTS WOULD HAVE SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON MIGRATION TO U.S. BORDER. REYES SAID GOM WAS INTENSIVELY STUDYING RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION PHENOMENON AND, IN PARTICULAR, WAS ATTEMPTING TO IDENTIFY THOSE AREAS RESPONSIBLE FOR HIGHEST OUT-MIGRATION, AS FIRST STEP TOWARD CONCENTRATING DEVELOPMENTAL EFFORT WHERE MOST NEEDED. ADDED THAT THESE AREAS WERE NOT NECESSARILY POOREST OR MOST DEPRESSED ONES -- OAXACA AND CHIAPAS, FOR EXAMPLE, AMONG MOST BACKWARD OF MEXICAN STATES, PRODUCED RELATIVELY LITTLE MIGRATION. THOSE AT TOP OF GOM PRIORITY LIST FOR DEVELOPMENT ATTENTION, HE ASSERTED, WERE THOSE SPAWNING HEAVIEST ILLEGAL MIGRATION TO U.S.

4. NEXT STEP, REYES SAID, WAS TO INCREASE PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITY IN THESE PINPOINTED AREAS AND THUS PROVIDE ALTERNATIVE TO OUT-MIGRATION. GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAM TO ENCOURAGE INDUSTRIAL DECENTRALIZATION, BY OFFERING TAX INCENTIVES AND INFRASTRUCTURE ADVANTAGES TO INDUSTRIES WILLING TO LOCATE IN SMALLER TOWNS, WAS IMPORTANT INGREDIENT IN THIS EFFORT. ANOTHER WAS INCREASED PROPORTION OF GOVERNMENT REVENUES GOING TO RURAL SECTOR, NOW 19 PERCENT OF TOTAL BUDGET. REYES NOTED THAT MOST GOVERNMENT RESOURCES WOULD BE CHanneled THROUGH EJIDOS, ALTHOUGH PRIVATE SMALL PROPERTY OWNERS WOULD NOT BE EXCLUDED IF THEY ORGANIZED COOPERATIVELY (REYES SAID THAT HIS MAIN JOB AS SUBSECRETARY WAS TO PROMOTE COLLECTIVIZATION AMONG BOTH EJIDATARIOS AND SMALL LAND-OWNERS -- "COOPERATIVE PRODUCTION", HE PREFERRED TO CALL IT).

5. SOMEWHAT SUPRISINGLY, MEXICANS ASSERTED THAT SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON RURAL MIGRATION HAD ALREADY OCCURRED AS RESULT OF GOM ATTENTION TO RURAL PROBLEMS. DESPITE RISING RATES OF EXPULSION OF ILLEGALS FROM U.S., BOTH WERE CONVINCED THAT SITUATION WAS NOT NEARLY SO BAD AS IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN WITHOUT THESE GOM EFFORTS AND THAT RATE OF INCREASE IN ILLEGAL MIGRATION, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT OVERALL POPULATION GROWTH, HAD ACTUALLY DECLINED.

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6. LUERS NOTED THAT FIGURES AVAILABLE TO US DID NOT SEEM TO SHOW THE SAME HOPEFUL TRENDS, BUT ADDED THIS ILLUSTRATED NEED TO EXCHANGE WHATEVER HARD DATA EITHER SIDE MIGHT BE ABLE TO DEVELOP. BOTH SIDES AGREED THIS WOULD BE AN IMPORTANT FUNCTION OF COMMISSION AND A VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION TO RESOLVING PROBLEM OF ILLEGALS. JOVA

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